

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1,3-7,10-11,15,17,19,22,35-39,41-44 are allowed.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Zurvan Mahamedi on June 6th, 2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A portable computing device comprising:
 - a housing;
 - a display accessible on a panel of the housing;
 - a multi-directional input mechanism consisting of navigational buttons; and
 - a processor coupled to the display and to the multi-directional input mechanism, the processor being configured to: detect an input signaled from the multi-directional input mechanism corresponding to a menu request; activate a first menu on the display in response to the menu request, the activated first

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menu displaying a menu bar and one or more menu items, wherein the menu bar corresponds to a portion of the first menu that provides an identifier of the first menu when the first menu is both active and inactive, and wherein when the first menu is active, each of the one or more menu items is associated with an action;

process navigation input signaled from the multi-directional input mechanism to navigate vertically from one of the one or more menu items in the active first menu to the portion of the active first menu that corresponds to the menu bar of the active first menu, so that the menu bar of the active first menu to be selectable;

process selection input signaled from the multi-directional input mechanism for when the menu bar is selectable; and cancel activation of the first menu from the display in response to (i) the menu bar of the first menu being selectable and (ii) the selection input for the menu bar being processed.

22. (Currently Amended) A portable computing device comprising:

a housing;

a display accessible on a panel of the housing;

a set of actuatable mechanisms consisting of navigational buttons provided on the housing; and

a processor coupled to the display and to the plurality of actuatable mechanisms, the

processor being configured to: detect an input corresponding to a menu request; in response to detecting the input corresponding to the menu request, assign a menu function to each actuatable mechanism in the set of actuatable mechanisms; and

display one or more sets of menu items that are active in response to the menu request, each of the one or more sets of menu items being displayed as at least a portion of a menu having a menu bar and one or more menu items, wherein the menu bar corresponds to a portion of the menu that provides an identifier of the menu when the menu is both active and inactive, and wherein when the menu is active, each of the one or more menu items is associated with an action;

while the one or more sets of menu items for at least the portion of the menu are active, process input corresponding to actuation of any one of the actuatable mechanisms as the menu function assigned to the actuated mechanism, wherein the processor is configured to display the menu bar with each of the one or more sets of menu items in response to receiving the menu request, and wherein the processor is configured to cancel activation of the one or more sets of menu items in response to (i) navigation input to navigate vertically to one of the one or more menu items in the active menu to the menu bar in order to cause the portion of the menu corresponding to the menu bar to be in a selectable state, and (ii) selection input for selecting the menu bar from the selectable state.

35-39 (Canceled).

41-44 (Canceled).

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The prior art is silent in teaching a portable computing device having a multi-directional input buttons that when signaled activates a first menu on the display displaying a menu bar. The menu bar corresponds to a portion of the first menu that provides an identifier of the first menu, then processing navigational input from the multi-directional input mechanism to navigate vertically from one or more menu items to make the menu bar selectable. Further processing input from the mechanism for when the menu bar is selectable and canceling activation of the first menu from the display in response to the menu bar of the first menu being selectable and the selection for the menu bar being processed, along with all of the claimed limitations.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to RYAN F. PITARO whose telephone number is (571)272-4071. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00am - 5:30pm Mondays through Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dennis Chow can be reached on 571-272-7767. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Ryan F Pitaro/
Examiner, Art Unit 2174